

DETAILED ACTION

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Bruce Gray (Reg. No. 35799) on 11/19/2008.

IN THE CLAIMS OF THE JULY 24, 2008 AMENDMENT:

In claim 5, line 3 after "and", "a" has been deleted.

In claim 5, line 23 after "detects", "a" has been replaced with -- the --.

In claim 6, line 23 after "detects", "a" has been replaced with -- the --.

In claim 7, line 2 after "toward", "a" has been replaced with -- the --.

Allowable Subject Matter

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Independent claim 1 of the 07/24/08 amendment, as modified by the examiner's amendment, is patentable over the prior art of record because the teachings of the references taken as a whole do not show or render obvious the combination set forth including a detector located on a sheet feeder at a location for detecting a front edge of a sheet and a rear edge of the sheet which has passed a handling member and has been put on an oblique carrier, wherein the detector is located downstream of the handling member; and a retracting mechanism, wherein the handling member is retracted by the retracting mechanism to a position away from an operative position adjacent the sheet passing the handling member in response to the detector detecting the front edge of the sheet, and wherein the handling member is returnable to the operative position by the retracting mechanism in response to the detector detecting the rear edge of the sheet after the detector detects the front edge of the sheet.

Independent claim 5 of the 07/24/08 amendment, as modified by the examiner's amendment, is patentable over the prior art of record because the teachings of the references taken as a whole do not show or render obvious the combination set forth including a detector located on a sheet feeder at a location for detecting a presence of a sheet which has passed a handling member and has been put on an oblique carrier, wherein the detector is located downstream of the handling member; and a retracting mechanism, wherein the handling member is held away from an operative position adjacent the sheet passing the handling member in response to the detector detecting a

front edge of the sheet, and wherein the handling member is returned to the operative position in response to the detector detecting a rear edge of the sheet after the detector detects a front edge of the sheet.

Independent claim 6 of the 07/24/08 amendment, as modified by the examiner's amendment, is patentable over the prior art of record because the teachings of the references taken as a whole do not show or render obvious the combination set forth including a detector located on a sheet feeder at a location for detecting a front edge of a sheet and a rear edge of the sheet which has passed a handling member and has been put on an oblique carrier, wherein the detector is located downstream of the handling member; and means for retracting the handling member away from an operative position adjacent the sheet passing the handling member when the detector detects the front edge of the sheet, and returning the handling member to the operative position when the detector detects the rear edge of the sheet after the detector detects the front edge of the sheet.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to THOMAS A. MORRISON whose telephone number is (571)272-7221. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 8am - 5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick Mackey can be reached on (571) 272-6916. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Patrick H. Mackey/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art
Unit 3653

11/19/08